

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
REGISTRATION FORM**

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

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**1. Name of Property**

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historic name Leakin Park

other names/site number B-4610

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**2. Location**

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street Windsor Mill Road; Franklintown Road

not for publication n/a city or town Baltimore vicinity n/a

state Maryland code MD county Independent City code 510 zip code 212

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**3. State/Federal Agency Certification**

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I, \_\_\_\_\_, as the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this \_\_\_\_\_ nomination \_\_\_\_\_ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property \_\_\_\_\_ meets \_\_\_\_\_ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant \_\_\_\_\_ nationally \_\_\_\_\_ statewide \_\_\_\_\_ locally. ( \_\_\_\_\_ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of certifying official

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property \_\_\_\_\_ meets \_\_\_\_\_ does not meet the National Register criteria. ( \_\_\_\_\_ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of commenting or other official

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

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**4. National Park Service Certification**

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I, hereby certify that this property is:

\_\_\_\_\_ entered in the National Register \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ See continuation sheet. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ determined eligible for the \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ National Register \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ See continuation sheet. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ determined not eligible for the \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ National Register \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ removed from the National Register \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ other (explain): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Keeper      Date  
   of Action

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**5. Classification**

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Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)

\_\_\_\_\_ private  
  x   public-local  
\_\_\_\_\_ public-State  
\_\_\_\_\_ public-Federal

Category of Property (Check only one box)

\_\_\_\_\_ building(s)  
  x   district  
\_\_\_\_\_ site  
\_\_\_\_\_ structure  
\_\_\_\_\_ object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>  5  </u>	<u>  4  </u>	buildings
<u>  2  </u>	<u>     </u>	sites
<u> 13 </u>	<u>  3 </u>	structures
<u>  3 </u>	<u>     </u>	objects
<u> 23 </u>	<u>  8 </u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register  
  0  

Name of related multiple property listing   n/a

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6. Function or Use

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Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: <u>DOMESTIC</u>	Sub: <u>single dwelling</u>
<u>DOMESTIC</u>	<u>secondary structure</u>
<u>RELIGION</u>	<u>religious facility</u>
<u>LANDSCAPE</u>	<u>garden</u>
<u>LANDSCAPE</u>	<u>forest</u>

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: <u>RECREATION AND CULTURE</u>	Sub: <u>outdoor recreation</u>
<u>COMMERCE/TRADE</u>	<u>organizational</u>

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7. Description

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Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

MID-19TH CENTURY/Italian Villa

\_\_\_\_\_

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation	<u>STONE</u>
roof	<u>METAL</u>
walls	<u>STONE</u>
other	<u>WOOD</u>

Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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**5. Statement of Significance**

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Applicable National Register Criteria (Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- ☐ A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☒ B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☒ C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☐ D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations (Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

- ☐ A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- ☐ B removed from its original location.
- ☐ C a birthplace or a grave.
- ☐ D a cemetery.
- ☐ E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- ☐ F a commemorative property.
- ☐ G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE  
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE  
ENGINEERING

Period of Significance 1855-1948

Significant Dates 1855; ca. 1857

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Thomas DeKay Winans

Cultural Affiliation n/a

Architect/Builder John Rudolf Niernsee  
J. Crawford Neilson

Narrative Statement of Significance (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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## 9. Major Bibliographical References

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(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS)

☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.

☐ previously listed in the National Register

☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register

☐ designated a National Historic Landmark

☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

Primary Location of Additional Data

☒ State Historic Preservation Office

☐ Other State agency

☐ Federal agency

☐ Local government

☐ University

☐ Other

Name of repository: \_\_\_\_\_

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## 10. Geographical Data

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Acreage of Property approx. 312 acres

USGS quadrangle Baltimore West, MD

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
A	<u>18</u>	_____	_____	B	<u>18</u>	_____
C	<u>18</u>	_____	_____	D	<u>18</u>	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet.						

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

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## 11. Form Prepared By

=====

name/title Peter E. Kurtze

organization Maryland Historical Trust date May 1997

street & number 100 Community Place telephone 410.514.7649

city or town Crownsville state MD zip code 21032

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**Additional Documentation**

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Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

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**Property Owner**

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(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name \_\_\_\_\_

street & number \_\_\_\_\_ telephone \_\_\_\_\_

city or town \_\_\_\_\_ state \_\_\_\_\_ zip code \_\_\_\_\_

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**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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Leakin Park  
Baltimore city, MD

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**Description Summary:**

The historic section of Leakin Park comprises approximately 312 acres, just inside the western limits of the city of Baltimore. It represents a portion of the Crimea estate, the mid-19th century country retreat of railroad magnate Thomas DeKay Winans, which originally comprised over 1,000 acres. The majority of the park is wooded, reflecting its condition at the time Winans acquired the property in 1855. The centerpiece of the park is Winans' country residence, known as the Crimea mansion or Oreanda, and its attendant buildings and structures including a private chapel in the board-and-batten Gothic style, two cottages, a stable, a gazebo, and a mock fort on the hillside below the mansion. Secondary structures include the ruins of a small stone outbuilding, a vaulted cellar, and the remains of an overshot wheel which actuated a pump to supply water to the mansion. The Crimea property is distinguished by features which reflect the Picturesque landscape aesthetic of the mid-19th century, including a processional entry from the south. The immediate grounds around the mansion remain surrounded by an extensive area of undeveloped forest to the west and south.



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**General Description<sup>1</sup>**

The existing cultural resources within Leakin Park are described below, listed according to their National Register categories.

THE CRIMEA ESTATE

**The cultural landscape of the Crimea estate (1 contributing site)**

Leakin Park preserves significant elements of the cultural landscape originally created as the setting for Winans' country retreat. These include the circulation system, comprising drives which entered the property from the north and south, and a loop north of the mansion around which the various secondary buildings were arrayed; various built landscape elements such as walls, earthworks, and water features; and the use of the surrounding forest, a natural landscape, as part of the mid-19th century cultural expression.

The size of the Crimea estate changed as the Winans family and heirs acquired and sold parcels of land. At the peak of their acquisition in the 1850s, the Winans controlled over 1000 acres in the area. Currently, the western half of Leakin Park, encompassing approximately 312 acres, roughly represents Thomas DeKay Winans' holdings at the end of his life in 1878.

At the time of Winans' purchase, the land was densely forested; only a relatively small portion was cleared for the construction of the buildings and the creation of a designed landscape. The surrounding forest was left intact as a background and buffer for the developed grounds; thus the natural landscape became part of the design scheme.

At one time, the path ascending the hill from the southwest, now used only by pedestrians, brought carriages up from the Franklinton Road that bisected the estate along Dead Run. A large, possibly original, Norway Spruce stands at the Franklinton Road entrance to the estate. Ascending the hill along the south approach to the mansion, a series of views unfolds in the Picturesque manner of the mid-19th century. Horizontally layered features, set among violets and vinca minor (periwinkle), reveal themselves as the former drive cuts back and forth across the hillside.

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<sup>1</sup>The following incorporates an edited and updated version of Section 7 of draft National Register documentation on the Crimea estate dated June 25, 1987, prepared by Lisa Jensen.



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The only vehicular approach to the mansion is now around the loop entering the estate from Windsor Mill Road at the northern border. The driveway passes along a low stone wall with regularly spaced trees set behind it. This wall serves to screen the mid-20th century parking lot and tennis courts located east of the drive, but likely predates those elements. Younger trees have been planted in a parallel row on the west side of the drive to create the effect of symmetry.

The conversion of the property for use as a public park has not markedly affected the integrity of its historic cultural landscape. Mid-20th century recreation-related introductions include playing fields, tennis courts, restrooms, facilities for educational programs, and a model steam railway; most of these elements are small in scale and placed in relatively unobtrusive locations.

The grounds immediately around the mansion retain several original features. The configuration and grading of the drive and grounds remain unchanged, and a number of early plantings survive, including large oak and tulip trees clustered near the mansion. A tall paulownia tree at the east side of the house is an import from Asia, reflecting the mid-19th century interest in exotic species. Old wisteria climbs the galleries at the back of the house. More recently-introduced elements, not consistent with the historic character of the landscaping, include a flagpole, liriope used as a ground cover, and Virginia red cedar within the driveway loop.

The most significant changes to the landscape apparently took place in the northern and northwestern areas of the property, fronting on Windsor Mill Road. Tennis courts and a parking lot were constructed in the northeastern corner of the property; while a stone wall lining the entrance drive helps to screen these elements, they nevertheless detract somewhat from the impression of the formal entrance and approach to the estate. The northwestern corner has been developed with playing fields, a model railway track, and a facility for agricultural programs; in the 19th century, this area was characterized by a tenant farm (removed in the 1940s) to which an oval track, possibly for training or racing horses, was added later in the century.<sup>1</sup>

**Crimea Mansion, ca. 1857 (1 contributing building)**

The main house is constructed of random gray ashlar masonry and is cubical in form, five bays wide by five bays deep and three stories high. It is covered with a shallow hipped roof clad in standing-seam metal; there

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is a considerable overhang at the eaves, and the apex features a cupola with a spiked ball finial. There are two pairs of corbeled brick chimneys.

The building reflects the Italianate style in its cubical massing, symmetrical fenestration, and the tall proportions of its windows which hold double-leaf casements below decorative carved lintels. A prominent feature is the massive wooden pendants that hang from the corners of the broad eaves.

The principal facade faces north. The paneled front door is surrounded by a multipane transom and sidelights and flanked by stone curbs that once supported a pair of cast-iron lions made in the owner's Russian shops (the lions were removed to Druid Hill Park in 1960, and now are located immediately inside the main entrance to the Zoo). The design of the one-story porte-cochere is amplified along the east and west sides of the house in the form of long covered porches. On the south elevation, the veranda is repeated and extended upward to the second floor. The veranda features jig-sawn brackets and balustrades. Russian wisteria once climbed up across the porches of the mansion and small vines can now be seen among the American Boxwood bushes off the rear veranda. The English Boxwood around the perimeter of the house may have been planted during Winans' lifetime; the American Boxwood bushes, a faster-growing species, presumably were added later to create the garden at the rear.

The mansion is sited at the crest of a hill which slopes away fairly steeply to the south. The slope of the hill is incorporated into the design by banking the house and by supporting the porches on brick piers that increase in height as the hill drops away. Thus, the rear of the house appears to be a full story taller, as the lowest level here is above grade. The entrances at grade level were for service functions and, although the outlines of former windows can be seen, they have been blocked and covered over with stucco.

Inside, the floor plan reflects the formal symmetry of the exterior with a center-passage plan, with rooms on either side of the axial hallway of the first floor. The doors leading to the rooms on either side have raised and fielded panels. The size of the individual panels varies within the stack of five in each door, but the top, middle and bottom panels are all shorter than the intermediate ones. Semi-transparent "privacy" glass has replaced some of the panels in the front door and those leading to the northern rooms, an alteration probably made in the course of converting the mansion to office use.

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The first-floor rooms are distinguished by their ample proportions and 14'8" ceiling heights. The room in the northwest corner has an extremely tall closet. During the 1930s, this room was furnished with oak furniture from Scotland.<sup>2</sup> This may have been the same "old-fashioned plain furniture" mentioned in a 19th century newspaper account.<sup>3</sup> The counterpart room in the northeast corner, adjacent to the staircase leading to the basement kitchen, probably was the family dining room, entered through double-leaf doors from the hallway.

Each of the two northern rooms has a rusticated stone mantel, mid-20th century remodelings of the original fireplaces. In each of these two rooms, the four window sills have been raised and the original sash replaced with louvered glass. The result of this interior change is seen on the exterior as random stone infill, not toothed into the original masonry at the base of eight front and side windows on the first floor.

At the intersection of the hallway axis with the second pair of openings, a knob in the ceiling remains from a chandelier. These two pairs of doors off the central hall reveal staircases at each side of the house. The curious feature of these circulation systems is that neither is clearly defined as the primary or monumental staircase. Each broad set of steps ascends with turned balusters and has vertical, recessed paneling, outlined with molding, under the decorated stringer. Each stair offers generous proportions except in its landing at the first floor. The western one, with its octagonal newel vertically ornamented with bead-and-disk molding and topped with a tiered finial, offers a straight run at the first floor. Insufficient room was provided at the bottom, however, when the double leaf doors, that appear to be original, are closed. This stairhall has a rounded flag holder in one corner and a small water closet is nestled off of the landing half way up to the second floor. The eastern one turns gracefully at the base, yet its bottom steps oddly butt into the doorway to the main hall. These paneled doors that separate the main hall from the staircase are infills that appear to have replaced a section of balustrade. The eastern staircase has a stacked set of steps to the basement with a turned newel post and matching decorative face string.

At the end of the barrel-vaulted central hall, the drawing room runs across the full width of the house. It features two massive stone fireplaces and tall, elegant pier mirrors between the pairs of windows at each end of the room. The depth of the stone walls is evident with the interior shutters that fold back into the reveals or close to cover the windows that extend down to floor level. An early 1930s description of the

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room mentions rich crimson curtains and rare rugs covering the polished floor.<sup>4</sup>

On the second floor, the plan is symmetrical along both the north-south and the east-west axes. The large corner rooms each offer four windows and a fireplace with a stone mantel of fairly simple design, the marble and decorative features varying from room to room. In the southwest room, the light-colored marble mantel is devoid of carving with the exception of a two-inch bead around the fireplace opening. Flat corbels with beveled edges appear to hang from the bevel-edged mantel shelf at the top of the piers. One of the other light-colored mantels, made of a different marble with larger patterned veining, has a routed outline in its frieze following the intrados of the cusped arch.

At each end of the central north-south axis, there are three rooms. The two, small, square ones may have been closets and the larger one a sitting room, accessed through the bedrooms. on either side. One has been converted to a bathroom, used by the caretaker's family. The second floor trim is a flat stock, approximately six inches wide with plain plinths and recessed corner blocks. The tall doors have six raised-and-fielded panels. The high composite baseboard has a gently curved ogee shoemold and beveled cap molding. Accounts of the house describe one second floor bedroom as being furnished entirely in highly ornate Russian style.<sup>5</sup>

On the third floor, there are three rooms on the north and south sides, each accessible from one of the stair landings. Many of these rooms have retained their original, grained woodwork, including double doors leading to each bedroom. When the solid, six-panel doors are shut, the occupant has sound privacy; when left open and the louvered door closed, convection currents can cool the room. The trim on the third floor is simple one-by-five inch casing with plain corner blocks and matching skirt below the window sills. The baseboard has a beveled molding on top, but not the shoe mold of the second floor. Some of the jigsawn brackets that supported drapery poles still remain. The drapery and the interior and exterior shutters could be operated to minimize summer heat build-up and the double-leaf casement windows could be operated to admit cooling breezes. The most interesting part of the third floor plan is the relationship among the three staircases. The two main sets of steps each arrive at a landing that can be visually closed off from the center with grained, double-leaf, louvered doors. In the center, a wooden spiral staircase ascends to the cupola. Louvers in the third floor doors and the access doors to the attic crawl spaces on each of the four sides provide



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natural ventilation for the heat rising through this summer home, exiting through the operable windows of the cupola.

The mechanical systems are an integral function of the building's design. The plan maximized the natural cooling available through convection currents. Because the house was designed primarily for seasonal use, the heat for the building was originally supplied by the small fireplaces in each of the corner rooms, as mentioned above. On the third floor, there are stove flues in the chimneys. A cistern in the east side of the attic stored water that was pumped up to the house by the water wheel at the base of the hill. The house was provided with gas for illumination, reportedly produced by an isolated gas-house on the property (perhaps the "en[gine?] ho[use] shown on the 1876 atlas near the mock fort). Another technological feature of the building was a dumbwaiter, supplied by James Bates of Baltimore. While elements such as these were not unique among upper-class dwellings in Baltimore in the period, Winans' engineering background (he was formally trained as a machinist<sup>6</sup>) may have played some role in their incorporation in the Crimea mansion.

As on the second and third floors, the basement plan uses the east-west axis as the primary organization, along with those load-bearing walls that support the secondary cross-axis. The tapering, round spindled eastern stair mentioned above opens to the central hall, while the western stair is enclosed and turns directly into the room at the southwest corner. Historical descriptions of the house make reference to thomas Winans' study and library. Is is possible that this private room may have served this purpose; Winans could have ascended and descended without passing through the more public circulation areas. The southeast room was used as the kitchen; a large old stove remains in place at the base of the chimney stack.

The mansion recently benefited from a thorough rehabilitation, and provides office space for a nonprofit park advocacy organization.

The symmetry and rigidity of the mansion contrasts with the romantic landscaping of the grounds. The subsidiary buildings are arranged around a loop which the north driveway forms in front of the mansion.

**"Caretaker's House", before 1876 and later (1 contributing building)**

Upon entering the estate from the north, the first building encountered is a two-story frame house on the west side of the drive. A T-shaped building footprint is shown on the 1876 Atlas; the present house,

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however, reflects the Shingle Style of the later 19th century, and apparently represents a substantial remodeling of an earlier building. The main part of the house--where the earlier portion remains most clearly expressed--is a long, single pile, rectangular block with a gable roof whose ridge is oriented east-west. A broad gambrel-roofed wing extends to the north, with a dormer and shallow oriel that break the gambrel-roofed volume. The house is clad in wooden shingles, and features a shallow oriel on the upper level of the north elevation, a gabled entry porch with stone piers on the west facade, a slight "kick" at the eaves of the gambrel roof and at the transition between the two stories of the gabled section, and large 8/8 windows, all hallmarks of the Shingle Style of ca. 1890. Traditionally identified as the residence of a caretaker for the estate, the building also may have been erected for members of the Hutton family, who inherited the estate from Thomas Winans.

**Chapel, ca. 1857 (1 contributing building)**

Across the drive from the Caretaker's House, the rectangular, board-and-batten, Gothic Revival chapel is dominated by its steeply pitched gable roof. The broad planes of the roof are clad in reddish composition shingles, probably replacing wood or slate shingles. A vestibule entry at the west end of the structure mimics the main gable and its decorative rake boards, while the east end is differentiated by a shallow chancel projecting out under the eaves. A small, low transept extends to the south at the east end of the building; this has a separate entrance, and likely served as a sacristy. The exterior of the chapel is painted in an earth tone, consistent with mid-19th century fashion. The building is three bays long, defined by double-leaf, arched windows with metal grilles. The interior has a central aisle between two rows of pews; walls and ceiling are finished in plaster, and elements of the roof framing are exposed and treated decoratively. The chapel remains essentially unaltered; it has recently benefited from repairs.

**Stable/Carriage House, ca. 1857 (1 contributing building)**

The Stable/Carriage House is located on the west side of the looped drive, south of the Caretaker's House. This nearly cubical two-story building was constructed of the same random rubble masonry as the Mansion, and is covered by a low-pitched hipped roof covered with standing-seam metal and capped with a ventilator. Its deeply overhanging soffits are decorated with bold wooden pendants like those on the mansion, in an appropriately smaller scale. The east elevation, facing a widening in the drive, opens up across the first floor with four sets of full-height wooden



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doors for carriages and on the second floor with four floor-to-eave height pairs of wooden shutters for the delivery of hay. The south wall has several windows without shutters, while the north and west walls are solid masonry. Low on the west wall there is an opening once used by the horses to enter the building from the keeping yard. Inside, the roof framing and stone walls have been left exposed.

**"Honeymoon Cottage", ca. 1857 (1 contributing building)**

Located on the west side of the drive south of the stable, this two-story stone building is traditionally known as the "Honeymoon Cottage," allegedly constructed for Winans' married children. Evidence to substantiate this association is lacking, however, and the building's form and location suggest that it may have functioned as servants' quarters. The building is a T-shaped structure of uncoursed rubble masonry, covered with a low hipped roof clad in standing-seam metal, with two broad chimneys. As on the mansion, the fenestration of the cottage comprises double-leaf casement windows fitted with exterior shutters. On the south side, the one-story porch with stone piers has been enclosed and a second-story screened wooden porch has been added. The interior contains ten rooms.

**Gazebo, mid- to late 19th century (1 contributing structure)**

East of the mansion, across the expanse of lawn along the east side of the drive is a small octagonal wooden gazebo which is located near the present picnic area. This structure has octagonal posts with curved upbraces, and a railing with jigsawed balusters.

**Bridle Path, date unknown (1 contributing structure)**

A curving bridle path of unknown date meanders under overhanging trees at the east edge of the lawn. This may correspond in part to the path shown in the 1876 atlas, leading to a Bowling Alley; no trace of the Bowling Alley remains, however.

**Waterwheel, ca. 1857 (1 contributing structure)**

The remains of a narrow metal waterwheel which powered a pump to convey water to the mansion can be seen from the Franklinton Road at the southwestern corner of the property. Steps lead down to the level of the overshot wheel from the hill above and continue down into the L-shaped stone wheel pit. The wheel, made by Regeister & Sons of Baltimore, has a

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diameter of approximately 20 feet. The rim is about two feet wide and is held in place by eight pairs of bowed spokes. All of the operating parts have been removed and the wheel has been fixed in place. Also, the curved blades that once caught the water have been lost with time. Remnants of the circulation piping still protrude from the ground.

**South Driveway, ca. 1857 (1 contributing structure)**

The remains of a broad path, partially lined with stone, gently sweep up the hill from Franklinton Road, past the waterwheel to the main house. Traces of an early stone curb or gutter can still be found along its route. It now passes a large expanse of grass on one side and a small clearing with modern stone fire pits on the other. This connection from the Franklinton Road to that part of the estate north of Dead Run appears to have been the original southern approach to the mansion. A few stately trees remain lining the driveway.

**Bridge, 19th and 20th century (1 contributing structure)**

A single-span bridge with stone abutments carries the entrance drive from Franklinton Road across Dead Run. This structure apparently comprises a concrete span of recent date, in combination with an iron railing and chamfered iron piers at the portals which were likely salvaged from a 19th-century bridge, perhaps the one which was reported lost in a flood in October, 1866.

**South Restroom, mid-20th century (1 non-contributing building)**

On the east side of the former entrance from Franklinton Road, at the base of the hill, a short footpath leads to a modern stone restroom building with a pyramidal roof, tucked inconspicuously behind plantings.

**Vaulted Cellar, third quarter 19th century (1 contributing structure)**

At the base of the hillside above Franklinton Road is a banked stone structure with a barrel-vaulted ceiling that was probably a root cellar. At one time two metal-edged trap doors opened in the ceiling, but they have been filled with concrete. This structure has been interpreted as a "dungeon" once rumored to exist as part of the mock fort located halfway up the hill toward the house.

**Retaining Walls, Small Stone House, third quarter 19th century (2 contributing structures)**

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On the hill just above the cellar are terraced retaining walls with large blue stone caps. Integrated in these walls is a random-coursed ashlar structure, one bay wide by one bay deep, which had a gable roof. Only the stone walls remain. The function of this structure is unclear; it may have served a utilitarian purpose, or may represent a whimsical Victorian folly or a children's playhouse.

**Mock Fort, third quarter 19th century (1 contributing structure)**

Halfway up the hillside are the remains of an earthwork and masonry rampart interpreted as a mock fort. Commanding an elevated position overlooking Franklinton Road, it comprises a curved stone retaining wall incorporating a series of masonry pads to support cannons. The 1876 Atlas identifies the structure as a fort with 6 guns. The fort's purpose is unclear. It may have been constructed as whimsical landscape feature in keeping with the Picturesque aesthetic of the mansion grounds. Alternatively, the structure has been explained as a defensive decoy created during the Civil War by secessionist Winans with the intent of dissuading Union troops from entering the property. By 1894, the rampart had become deteriorated, but retained several five or six pound guns set in ship's carriages.<sup>7</sup>

**Water features; ponds, pool, third quarter 19th century (3 contributing structures)**

Farther up the hill toward the mansion are two small curved retaining walls that pond small streams. The water passes under the path through culverts. Also, one can find stones piled in a swale, another conscious effort to adapt the ravine drainage patterns, minimizing erosion. Near the top of the path is a circular brick pool. A pipe feeding one side implies a pond or fountain, but the axial slots around the rim suggest the structure may once have had columns, creating a gazebo.

**Northwest entry drive; tenant farm site (1 contributing structure; 1 contributing site)**

At the northwest corner of the park, there is a secondary entrance from Windsor Mill Road, with a driveway which formerly led to a tenant farm, presumably demolished in the mid-1940s. The tenant farm buildings are documented in a series of photographs taken ca. 1943. The house is shown with a 2½ story gable roofed stone main block, 3 bays wide, one end chimney, and two gabled dormers; lower 2 story frame wings, two bays wide, had been added on either side. Farm buildings included a small round barn,

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covered in board-and-batten siding with a louvered cupola at the peak of its roof, and one or more gable-roofed board-and-batten barn(s). The drive now provides access to the Model Train Rail, City Farm Building, and Restroom building.

**Model Train Rail, mid-20th century (1 non-contributing structure)**

This facility supports the activities of the Chesapeake and Allegheny Steam Preservation Society.

**City Farm Building, mid-20th century (1 non-contributing building)**

This is a one-story, U-shaped stone building with a gable roof; it has small windows located high in the walls. It functions to support urban agriculture demonstration projects.

**North Restroom, mid-20th century (1 non-contributing building)**

This is a modern stone building with a pyramidal roof, similar to the restroom near the Franklinton Road entrance.

**North Entrance Gates; Cast-Iron Eagle Sculptures, mid-19th century and ca. 1928 (3 contributing objects)**

The entrance from Windsor Mill Road is marked by stone pillars surmounted by cast-iron eagles, reportedly fabricated in Winans' Russian shops. One of the eagles is reportedly original to The Crimea; the other was moved from Winans' city property, Alexandroffsky, about 1928.

**Tennis Courts, Parking Lot (2 non-contributing structures)**

Tennis courts and a parking lot are located at the northeast corner of the property, near the entrance from Windsor Mill Road. These structures are partially screened by a low stone wall which lines the entrance drive.

**Carrie Murray Center, third quarter 20th century (1 non-contributing building)**

Located in the forest east of the mansion, the Carrie Murray Center is a modern building used for educational programs.



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**Significance Summary**

Leakin Park is significant under Criterion B for the association of the Crimea estate with Thomas DeKay Winans, a prominent Baltimore industrialist who is credited with the establishment of the Russian railway system in the mid-19th century. It derives additional significance under Criterion C for the character of the mid-19th century romantic landscape which provided the setting for Winans' country retreat, and for the architectural character of the Crimea mansion and attendant buildings. The period of significance, 1855-1948, begins with the acquisition of the property by railroad magnate Winans, who developed a portion of it as a country residence in the Picturesque manner while retaining the surrounding forest intact, and ends with the purchase of the property by the city of Baltimore for incorporation into the public park system.

**Resource History and Historic Context**

Leakin Park, whose development as a public recreational facility by the city of Baltimore began in the mid-20th century, embodies elements of a mid-19th century designed landscape in the romantic picturesque style surrounded by a large area of undeveloped forest.

**The Crimea Estate<sup>2</sup>**

The present Leakin Park comprises the former country estate of railroad entrepreneur Thomas DeKay Winans (1820-1878). Winans' father, Ross Winans, managed the Mount Clare machine shops for the Baltimore and Ohio railroad. A prolific and successful inventor, Ross Winans is credited with several early innovations in rail transportation, including the invention of a wheel that helped trains negotiate curves, the "crab" locomotive with horizontal cylinders, the "camelback," which was powerful enough to cross the Allegheny Mountains, and a locomotive whose speed could not be measured by the instruments of the time.<sup>8</sup>

Thomas Winans was trained as a machinist, and was sent along with his younger brother William to Russia in 1844. Their charge was to establish shops at Alexandroffsky, near St. Petersburg, to fulfill their father's five-year contract to construct 200 locomotives and 7,000 cars for Czar

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<sup>2</sup>The following incorporates an edited and updated version of Section 8 of draft National Register documentation on the Crimea estate dated June 25, 1987, prepared by Lisa Jensen.

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Nicholas I. Working 11- $\frac{1}{2}$  hour days, six days a week, the Winans shops completed this order a year ahead of schedule. The Winans also laid out the railroad from St. Petersburg to Moscow and constructed stone and iron bridges along the alignment.

Thomas Winans left his brother in Russia to carry out additional contracts for the maintenance of the rolling stock, and returned to Baltimore in the early 1850s with a personal fortune estimated at \$2 million. Through his continued business relationship with the Russian government, Winans' wealth grew to ten times that figure by the time of his death in 1878.

Returning to Baltimore, Winans built a villa for himself and his Russian bride of French and Italian descent, Celeste Reveillon, on West Baltimore Street between Fremont and Callender streets. Named "Alexandroffsky" after the site of Winans' Russian shops, the gray stone mansion was designed by John Rudolf Niernsee and J. C. Neilson. The grand Italianate house incorporated the latest in architectural fashion and convenience; it was among the first in Baltimore to have a central heating plant (One West Mount Vernon Place, also designed by Niernsee & Neilson and constructed in 1850 for Dr. Thomas, was centrally heated as well). Tradition holds that the high brick wall around Alexandroffsky was built in response to neighbors' complaints about the nude Classical statuary in the Winans' garden; photographs taken ca. 1870, however, suggest that the wall was an integral part of the original architectural composition, incorporating a gatehouse.<sup>9</sup>

In 1855, Winans acquired property for a country retreat just a few miles west of his city residence.<sup>10</sup> His country estate, which he called The Crimea, was set among wooded hills and offered respite from the city's heat. Tradition holds that the mansion house itself was named Oreanda, after a huge resort park in Crimea on the Black Sea. Niernsee & Neilson, the premier local exponents of the Italianate style whom Winans had recently commissioned for his city residence, also designed the Crimea mansion, which was constructed about 1857.<sup>11</sup> Like Alexandroffsky with its high wall, The Crimea also afforded privacy for the Winans family through its siting at the center of a large tract of dense forest. Both properties were distinguished by an iron eagle representing the Russian coat-of-arms, cast in Winans' Russian shops. (When Alexandroffsky was demolished about 1925, its eagle was moved to The Crimea, and with its companion statue was placed atop the gateposts at the north entrance to the estate from Windsor Mill Road. Several Classical figures also were transported to the estate at that time; their present whereabouts are unknown.)



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In establishing his country estate just outside what were then the western city limits, Winans joined several other wealthy and powerful Baltimoreans who had built impressive homes in the area, conferring upon the neighborhood the name "The Mansions." These included industrialist Joseph P. Ellicott at Grantly, publisher A. S. Abell at Woodbourne, Colonel Hugh Gelston at Gelston Heights, James Carey at The Mount, in addition to James Carroll, who occupied his family's 18th century seat at Mount Clare, and U. S. Senator Reverdy Johnson, whose property was located along the Gwynn's Falls. Of these mansions only Mount Clare survives, within a portion of its estate which was acquired by the city in 1890 for Carroll Park; the other estates all have been absorbed within the city's urban development, leaving The Crimea as the sole remaining example of its type in the area.

Thomas Winans' prowess as an inventor approached that of his father. He held patents on slide valves for steam engines, and improvements to ventilation systems, the buggy wagon, the organ, and pianoforte. In the late 1850s he created the "cigar" steamship, whose streamlined hull was intended to reduce rolling and seasickness; this hull shape influenced the design of many later vessels. His philanthropies included the establishment in the early 1860s of a soup kitchen, which reportedly fed thousands of city residents daily.

The Italianate style house was nestled within a tract that at one time comprised almost a thousand acres and was notable for its pristine natural landscape, comprising a mixed mesophytic forest which remains relatively undisturbed today. Enhancing this natural landscape were informal plantings, rolling wildflower meadows, orchards, bowers, gardens, and arbors. A fountain was located near the house, and a rustic bridge spanned the Dead Run.

On the grounds were tenant houses, stables for Winans' thoroughbred horses, and caretakers' quarters. A board-and-batten chapel reflecting the influence of Richard Upjohn and the Ecclesiological Movement was constructed for the residents of the estate, but Mrs. Winans' death reportedly prevented its completion. Buildings which formerly existed on the estate and have since vanished include a bowling alley shown in an atlas of 1876; photographs record the tenant houses and a children's playhouse styled as a miniature replica of the mansion. A private gas plant also formerly operated on the estate.<sup>12</sup>

Among the surviving features of the estate are the remnants of an overshot waterwheel at the southwest corner, near the Franklinton Road,

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which reportedly powered a pump to provide water to the mansion. A brick rampart fitted with wooden cannons located on the slope below the mansion, facing Franklintown Road, presents the appearance of a mock fort; this has been interpreted as a device installed by Winans, an outspoken Confederate sympathizer, before a journey to Europe in 1865, for the purpose of intimidating Union troops during his absence. Alternatively, the "fort" may represent nothing more than a curiosity or folly, in keeping with the romantic landscape ideals of the 19th century. Another element which has spawned its own legend is the vaulted structure set into the hillside below the mansion; held to be a dungeon for slaves, this structure more likely served a more prosaic function as a root cellar.

Thomas Winans died in 1878, one year after his father, Ross. He bequeathed the property to his son, Ross, and his daughter, Celeste Marguerite. Celeste Marguerite had met her husband, Gann M. Hutton, in St. Petersburg on a trip with her father.<sup>13</sup> The estate passed to the Huttons' son, Reginald, and then to Reginald's daughter, Celeste Winans Hutton. Thomas Winans' descendants preferred to live in the third house he built, in Newport, Rhode Island, and returned to The Crimea only for brief visits.

In 1896, the family sold off 80 acres on the east side of Gwynn's Falls north of Windsor Mill Road for the development of the suburban residential community called Windsor Hills. They continued ownership of the remainder of the estate until the 1940s.

**Leakin Park<sup>3</sup>**

The Winans family's private retreat was identified as a desirable location for a public park as early as 1904, but the conversion to municipal use did not take place until nearly a half-century later.

In the spirit of comprehensive planning which preceded the City Beautiful movement at the turn of the 20th century, the Municipal Art Society of Baltimore commissioned the Olmsted Brothers of Brookline, Massachusetts, a nationally-renowned landscape planning firm and successors to pioneering landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted, to present recommendations for a system of parks to serve the growing city. The firm's findings were incorporated in their Report Upon the Development of

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<sup>3</sup> A comprehensive treatment of the acquisition of Leakin Park may be found in Nancy E. Vinton, "Leakin Park: Past, Present, and Future," ms., Goucher College, December 1975.

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Public Grounds for Greater Baltimore, published in 1904. Among their observations was that the upper Gwynn's Falls valley had "the character of a wooded gorge, the scenery is remarkably beautiful, of a picturesque and sylvan sort seldom possible to retain so near a great city . . ."<sup>14</sup>

Some four decades later, the means to realize the Olmsted firm's recommendation that the city acquire property in the upper Gwynn's Falls valley for the benefit of its citizens was made available by an unusual bequest. Lawyer and philanthropist J. Wilson Leakin (1857-1922) left to the city in his will two parcels of improved downtown real estate, 101-103 North Howard Street and 113-115 West Fayette Street, with the stipulation that they be sold five years after his death and the proceeds be invested in a public park. However, these properties were encumbered by long-term leases which complicated their marketing, and the Great Depression further delayed their liquidation.

A city commission was established in 1933 to consider alternatives for the acquisition of park land under the Leakin bequest. The Commission of the City Plan on Extensions of the Baltimore Park System determined that the Leakin fund might be expended in one of three ways: to add a single new park to the system, with the balance (if any) to be designated for its maintenance; to purchase several parks and playgrounds in various locations throughout the city; or to furnish improvements in existing parks. In 1938, Susan Leakin, sister of the donor, and the Peabody Conservatory, a legatee under the will, filed petitions in Baltimore Circuit Court asserting that Leakin's intention was that his bequest be used to purchase a single park, not for multiple areas or improvements to existing parks. The court found in favor of the petitioners, and the commission narrowed its search to appropriate locations for a single major park. Sites in Cherry Hill, Govans, East Baltimore, and the Crimea estate in the upper Gwynn's Falls valley remained under active consideration.

The Municipal Art Society again sought the Olmsted firm's advice on a location for the new park. The Olmsted Brothers reiterated their observations on the significance of the upper Gwynn's Falls valley, and recommended that the city purchase the Crimea estate. Among the properties under consideration, only the Crimea site met all of their five essential requirements in its uniqueness, integrity, accessibility, beauty, and affordability. Moreover, the Olmsted firm indicated that the city would not need to make major improvements in order to realize the Crimea's value to the public; it would only be necessary to preserve and maintain "the exceptional beauty of its landscape, which already exists in a high state of perfection."<sup>15</sup> Like the Rogers estate which the city had acquired for

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Druid Hill Park, and the Johns Hopkins estate which became Clifton Park, the major landscape amenities, both cultural and natural, were already in place at the Crimea. Acting in accordance with the firm's recommendations, the city in 1941 acquired the lower portion of the estate, containing 243 acres, for \$109,431. In 1948 the remaining parcel of 69 acres--including the Crimea mansion and its associated buildings, structures, and landscape--was purchased by the city for \$40,000.

Notes:

1. A small complex of farm buildings is shown on the 1876 Hopkins atlas; the 1898 Bromley atlas shows several additional buildings and an oval track.
2. "Estate Recalls Old Russia," Baltimore News-Post, January 5, 1932.
3. "A Day at the Crimea," The Sunday Herald, Baltimore, April 22, 1894.
4. "Estate Recalls Old Russia".
5. Giza, Joanne, and Catherine F. Black. Great Baltimore Houses: An Architectural and Social History. Baltimore: Maclay & Associates, 1982, p. 67. Baltimore architect Addison Worthington also visited the house and described these furnishings (Michael F. Trostel, FAIA, personal communication).
6. Cyclopedia of Representative Men. Baltimore, 1878.
7. "A Day at the Crimea," Baltimore Sunday Herald, April 22, 1894.
8. Giza and Black, p. 65.
9. Michael F. Trostel, FAIA, personal communication, 1987
10. The property on which the mansion stands was purchased by Winans from Thomas E. Dall for \$19,000 on July 19, 1855; the deed was not recorded until September 28, 1864. Winans family papers, Maryland Historical Society.

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11. This attribution was provided by Randolph W. Chalfant, author of a forthcoming monograph on Niernsee & Neilson, from research in Winans family papers by John McGrain.

12. Alexandra Lee Levin, "A Russian Railroad Made Winans Family Rich," Baltimore Sun Magazine, October 10, 1976.

13. Giza and Black, p. 67.

14. Olmsted Brothers. Report Upon the Development of Public Grounds for Greater Baltimore. Baltimore: Muncipal Art Society of Baltimore City, 1904; rpt. FMOPL, Inc., 1987, p. 76.

15. Olmsted Brothers, "The Selection of a Site for Leakin Park," ms., July 12, 1939, p. 7.



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**HISTORIC CONTEXT**

MARYLAND COMPREHENSIVE HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN DATA

Geographic Organization: Piedmont

Chronological/Developmental Period(s):

Industrial-Urban Dominance: A.D. 1870-1930

Modern Period: A.D. 1930-Present

Historic Period Theme(s):

Architecture/Landscape Architecture/Community Planning

Resource Type:

Category: District

Historic Environment: Rural

Historic Function(s) and Use(s):

DOMESTIC/single dwelling

DOMESTIC/secondary structure

RELIGION/religious facility

LANDSCAPE/garden

LANDSCAPE/forest

Known Design Source:

Niernsee & Neilson, architects



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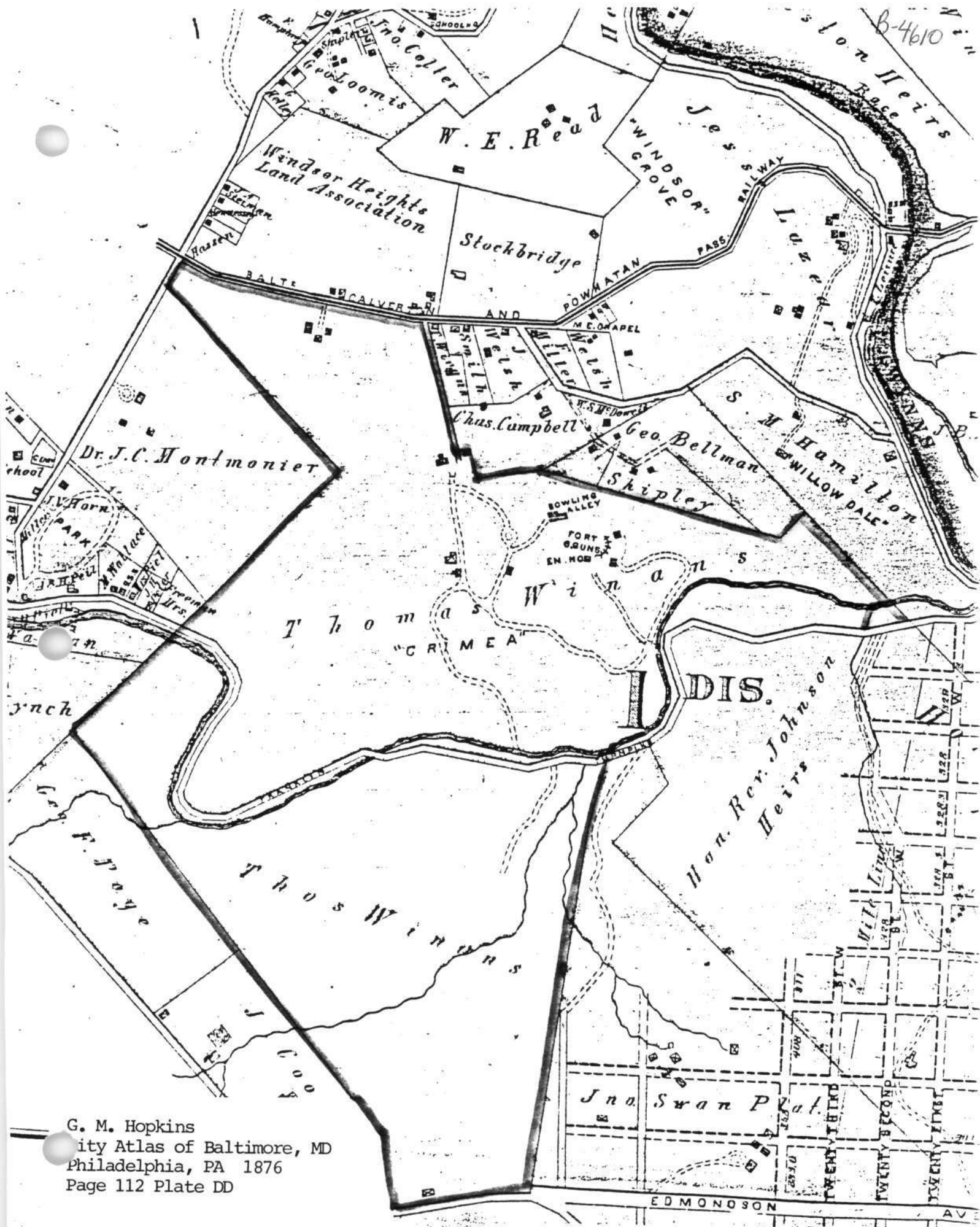
**GEOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION**

**Verbal Boundary Description:**

The property is generally bounded by Windsor Mill Road on the North, Wetheredsville Road on the east, Forest Park Avenue and Cooks Lane on the west, and the community of Rognel Heights on the south. Boundaries are depicted on the attached map.

**Boundary Justification:**

The boundaries are those historically associated with the country estate of Thomas DeKay Winans, called Crimea, at the time of Winans' death in 1878. The property retains considerable integrity to that period, with much of its natural and designed landscape intact. Additional undeveloped woodland extends to the east; while this area is now under the same ownership as the property under consideration, it lacks cultural resources related to the areas of significance identified in this documentation.











B-4610

LEAKIN PARK

BALTIMORE CITY, MD

PETER E. KURTZE, 6/94

NEG AT MD SHPO

CRIMEA MANSION

FROM E



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LEAKIN PARK

BALTIMORE CITY, MD

PETER E. KURTZE, 6/94

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B-4610

LEAKIN PARK

BALTIMORE CITY, MD

PETER F. KURTZE, 6/94

NEG AT MD SHPO

"CARETAKER'S HOUSE"

FROM NE





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LEAKIN PARK

BALTIMORE CITY, MD

PETER E. KURTZE, 6/94

NEG AT MD SHPO

GAZEBO

FROM W



B-4610

LEAKIN PARK

BAITIMORE CITY, MD

PETER E. KURTZE, 6/94

NEG AT MD SHPO

BRIDGE OVER DEAD RUN

FRANKLINTOWN ROAD ENTRANCE

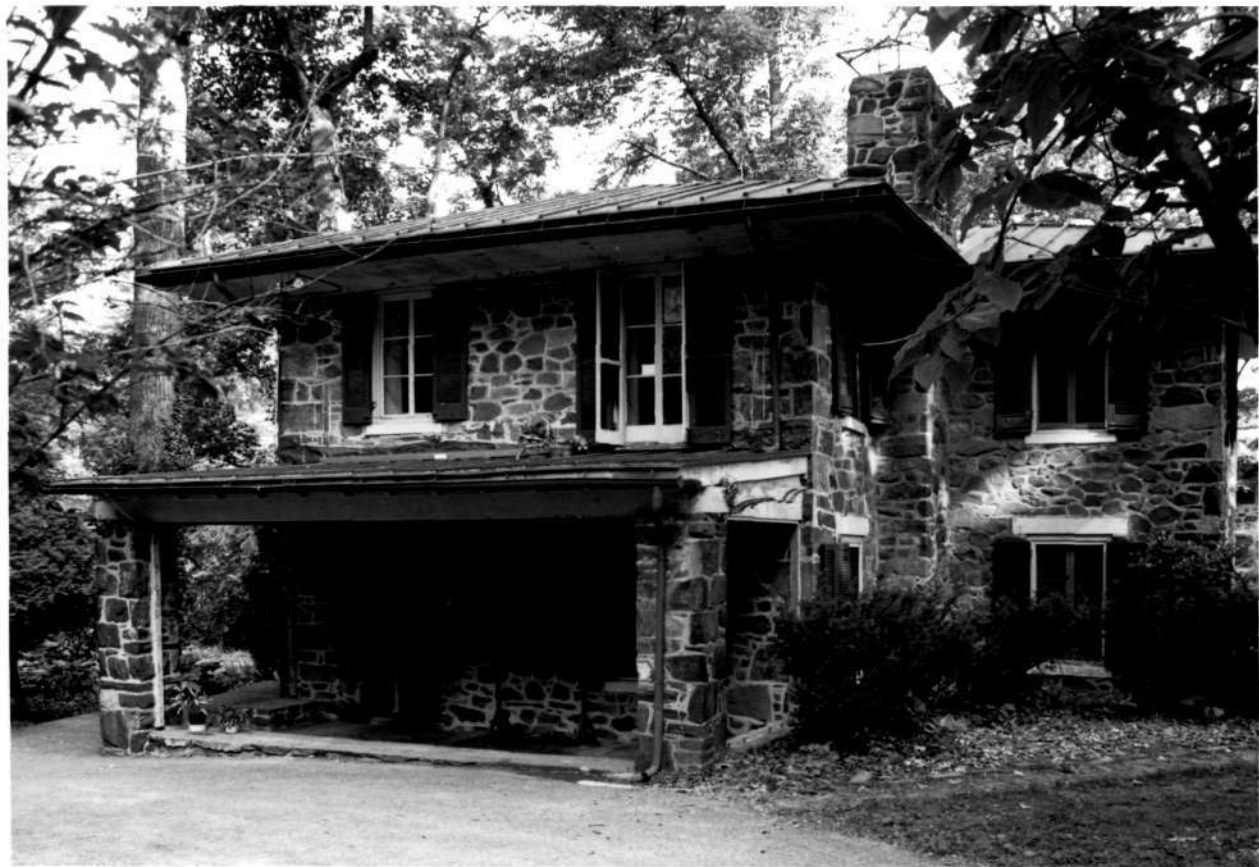
FROM W





B-4610  
LEAKIN PARK  
BALTIMORE CITY, MD  
PETER E. KURTZE, 6/94  
NEG AT MD SHPO

SMALL STONE HOUSE RUIN  
FROM W



B-4610

LEAKIN PARK

BALTIMORE CITY, MD

PETER E. KURTZE, 6/94

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"HONEYMOON COTTAGE"

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